





# The Army's





# Bowl Game

Story by Gil High

Alamodome—San Antonio, Texas, Saturday, Jan. 3, 2004







▲ Confetti showers the players of the East team as they celebrate their victory in the third-annual bowl game.

Photo by Gil High

THE nation's top 78 high school football players will invade the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, Jan. 3 for the fourth-annual U.S. Army All-American Bowl. The competition is the largest high school football event in America, and will match up players in a contest between East and West. But the All-American Bowl — which will be broadcast live on NBC — is about much more than football.

For players such as Chris Leak, last year's top-rated quarterback, the game is about passage. Leak announced his acceptance of a scholarship from the University of Florida before last year's game, then took the field to lead the East's team to a crushing 47-3 victory over the West.

"This was a great way to finish my high school career — in front of national television and being with family and friends," Leak said afterward. "It was a great feeling, and something that will change me for the rest of my life. This is a legendary game."

For LTG Dennis Cavin, the All-American Bowl is about connecting to the high school community and raising awareness of the Army and its role in helping young Americans succeed.

"The game provides us an opportunity to showcase the positive qualities that the Army and high school football share — leadership and teamwork in action," the commander of U.S. Army Accessions Command said. "This and our other sports-related programs provide venues for face-to-face interaction with young people and

their families, enabling us to showcase the wide variety of opportunities, life skills and leadership training available through the service."

While viewers watching the game from home will focus on the action on the field, the Army's activities in San Antonio will be much more extensive.

Members of the U.S. Army Band (Pershing's Own) will help high school band members improve their music and marching skills as they participate in Band Fest, a multiple-day event that also prepares the bands for a competition and a pre-game performance.

The evening before the game, the 3rd U.S. Infantry Regiment (The Old Guard) will perform a twilight tattoo at the Alamodome for game participants, their families and the San Antonio community. Part of that





- Fans attending the All-American Bowl not only have the chance to see top-ranked high school football teams in action, they can get a close-up view of Army equipment.



performance depicts the Army's history through music, pageantry, a display of state flags and Soldiers wearing period uniforms. Old Guard Soldiers and Army Band members will also participate in portions of the pre-game show and halftime activities.

Spectators at last year's All-American Bowl were awed by air-assault instructors from the 101st Airborne Division, who rappelled to

*(Continued on page 28)*

- Wearing period costumes, members of the Old Guard's Fife and Drum Corps provide some spirited music at the bowl game festivities.
- A rock-climbing tower manned by members of an Army recruiting mission-support team is always a major attraction at Army-sponsored sporting events and activities.





Gil High



Visitors to the Army Marksmanship Unit's booth get the chance to learn shooting techniques.

Army recruiting events give people the chance to talk to Soldiers, and allow the Soldiers to talk about their jobs and the equipment they use.

## Want Bowl tickets?

U.S. Army All-American Bowl tickets are available through the Alamodome box office at (210) 207-3663 or Ticketmaster at (210) 224-9600.

Lower-level reserve seating is \$25, and general admission seating costs \$15.



Tickets are also available at [www.ticketmaster.com](http://www.ticketmaster.com)

## Can't make it to the Game?

The All-American Bowl will be broadcast live on NBC.



(Continued from page 27)

centerfield from the top of the Alamodome to deliver the game ball to officials. But Alamodome plaza is the place for fans and visitors to get their closest view of the Army.

There, at the Fan Fest, Soldiers from nearby installations talk to potential recruits and their families, explaining how military equipment operates and providing insights on the jobs Soldiers perform. Visitors can also get a hands on experience at special booths set up by the Army Marksmanship Unit from Fort Benning, Ga., and recruiting mission support teams, which invite visitors to try their skills at training simulators,

rock-climbing towers and other interactive venues.

At a news conference before last year's Bowl game, Accessions Command's strategic outreach director, COL Thomas Nickerson, explained the importance of Army participation in sports activities and the importance of involving individual Soldiers.

"The Army has a mission to recruit 110,000 people each year," he said. "If we never get our message out to our audience about service to our country and about the opportunities we offer — more than 200 jobs in the active Army and 180 jobs in the reserve component — how will they know?"

This year's game is being presented as "An All-American Tribute To Freedom," to honor American Soldiers serving all over the world. SportsLink, a sports marketing company that specializes in managing and producing sporting events, and is producing this year's game, will donate one game ticket to Soldiers for every ticket sold.

Additionally, the Army's pre-game and halftime activities will pay tribute to the many thousands of Soldiers who have protected America's freedoms, especially those serving in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. 